

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES – JUNE 18, 2003

Chairman Tim Lambert called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

**Mimi Wright's Presentation**

- Presentation by Mimi Wright Member of the Board of Visitors of Horn Point Facility on the Eastern Shore Maryland.
- Ms. Wright was the recipient of the North East Region Tree Farmer of the Year Award for 2002.
- Ms. Wright is assisting DNR with evaluating wildlife habitat and forest resources.
- Ms. Wright presented a steel chainsaw and the gear to the LeCompte's Wildlife staff. The wildlife staff assisted Ms. Wright on several projects for the last seven or eight years.
- Mr. John Moulis, Eastern Region Manager, publicly thanked Ms. Wright for the donation and for entertaining their recommendations.

**Approval for Minutes from April 2003 Meeting**

- Approval for April 2003 Meeting minutes is deferred to the July meeting.
- April 2003 Meeting minutes changes:
  - 1) The Black Bear Task Force Report on page 4 and under number (iii) (a) corrected statement to reflect, "Commissioner Lamp suggested that the Department conducts a statistical inference testing."
  - 2) The Black Bear Task Force Report on page 5 and under number 3 (b) should read, "The annual harvest for each of those states are an estimate of 20 to 25 percent bears per year." The Game Program will provide clarification regarding that statement.
  - 3) Added Commissioner Fratz as an attendee.
  - 4) Maryland Farm Bureau Report on page 7 last bullet, changed the wording to reflect, "The birds are roosting on livestock bins on neighbors' property."
  - 5) In order to save time, Chairman Lambert will send the changes to the Commissioners, prior to the next meeting in order for the Commissioners to review the changes ahead of time.

**New Legislative Concept Proposals**

- Presentation by Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS) Staff
- Mr. Robert Colona handed out the first Best Management Practices (BMP) and handed out Trapping and Furbearer Management in North American Wildlife Conservation to the Commissioners.
- Mr. Robert Colona reminded some of the Commissioners regarding concepts for obtaining a fur user license.
  - (a) The fur user license or stamp will be for anyone who hunts, chase, traps, and pursue furbearers.
  - (b) The Fur Resource Committee supported the concept of a fur user license. The Fur Resource Committee reports to the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
  - (c) The concept requires mandatory education for all fur groups. This will ensure that individuals are using ethical humane practices when they are harvesting furbearers.
  - (d) Landowners will be required to have a fur user license; however, WHS will gratis the license fee for landowners. Also, WHS will establish a junior fur user license.
  - (e) The dollars collected from the fur user license will be applied to the furbearer program.
  - (f) This process will allow WHS to collect harvest data on furbearers and user data.
  - (g) If the bill is introduced, WHS would like to repeal the prohibition in § 10-503 Hunting and trapping beaver and otter by nonresidents [Attachment A]. This will allow nonresidents of the State to trap beavers and otters to assist with the nuisance calls that the Department receives.
  - (h) Mr. Colona will schedule a meeting to discuss these concepts with the Maryland Farm Bureau.
  - (i) Mr. Colona will provide the concepts in writing for the Commissioners.
- Best Management Practices (BMP) for Trapping Coyotes
  - 1) BMP provided recommendations to state wildlife agencies to be used as an educational tool.
  - 2) This publication provides information on traps that met BMP criteria for coyotes in the Eastern United States.
  - 3) As for the animal welfare scale, the BMP used scales that were developed by International Standards Organization and the European Union. These groups are internationally accepted as the most efficient way to evaluate trap damage to animals.
  - 4) BMP have seven more species scheduled to be completed by April 2004.

- Questions and Answers
  - 1) Mr. Carl DeMatteo asked how the Department will establish the educational programs for the trappers and landowners.
    - (a) Setting up the educational program is still in the developmental stage.
    - (b) The goal is to have Mr. Robert Colona work with the various fur user groups and organizations to develop an acceptable course of study. At that point, individuals from these groups and organizations will be certified instructors and the Department will assist and provide technical assistance.
    - (c) The requirement for landowner's education is yet to be decided; however the landowner will need to purchase a fur user license. This will allow the Department to collect data from a landowner.
  - 2) Commissioner Fratz asked whether or not there is a reduction in fur users.
    - (a) There was a decline in fur users around 10 to 15 years ago.
    - (b) In the last 3 to 4 years, fur users' participation is slowly increasing on the national scale. Some fur users are driven by the market price, and for some fur users it is a way of life.
  - 3) Chairman Lambert asked for explanation on the purpose of having the educational program.
    - (a) This will ensure that the Department has individuals with ethical techniques for harvesting furbearers, and this is no difference from the reason why the Department requires the hunter education course.
    - (b) This will also partially protect the image of trapping. By providing good structured education, it will eliminate the amount of abusers.
    - (c) Chairman Lambert commented that the landowner should enroll in the educational program.
  - 4) Commissioner Lamp questioned about the acquisition of the fur user license to go through the educational program, would it be retroactive for everyone who is already a trapper now.
    - (a) WHS discussed a grandfather clause for the first year.
    - (b) Basically, the first year the license is offered for purchase by any fur user; however, following the first year, WHS will require all the mandatory educational requirements for fur users unless they held a fur user license prior to that.
  - 5) Commissioner Dollar asked what the population status on otters is.
    - (a) Currently, WHS does not have population data on otters.
    - (b) Throughout the Country, otters are doing well. Otters have been reestablished in areas where the population was low.
  - 6) Commissioner Dollar asked that the intent to repeal the law § 10-503 is to control, but is there any equivalent ecological or property damages for beavers as for otters.
    - (a) The last change to § 10-503 was in 1973. Laws prohibiting non-residents from harvesting game have been challenged and defeated in numerous states.
    - (b) This will allow recreation opportunities for individuals without negatively impacting the populations. The Department will see an increase in revenue.
  - 7) Commissioner Lamp asked if any of the national recognized animal welfare groups are involved in this BMP.
    - (a) National recognized wildlife professionals and certified wildlife veterinaries were involved in the BMP.
    - (b) The animal welfare groups or organizations were not involved in the BMP. This was an internal production of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; therefore, everyone involved was a wildlife biologist or a specialist in the wildlife profession.
  - 8) Commissioner Lamp reiterated the notion of the usage of steel leghold traps have been criticized and condemned by some of the largest veterinary associations in the world.
  - 9) Commissioner Dollar asked if the veterinary associations produced a similar publication to support their findings. Commissioner Lamp would gladly provide to the Commissioners letters from the veterinary associations condemning the use of steel leghold traps and their recommendations.
    - (a) They have not produced a publication.
    - (b) As for the studies, the BMP is the largest research undertaking that have ever been initiated to evaluate animal welfare attributes of traps.
- Chairman Lambert made a recommendation to the Commissioners to entertain the thought of requiring an educational course for everyone who does not fall under the grandfather clause for discussion and recommendation at the next meeting. Chairman Lambert would like to hear from Commissioner Freeland since Commissioner Freeland, is a representative for the Maryland Farm Bureau.
- Master Hunting Guide Law
  - 1) Last year, the Department tried to revise the Master Hunting Guide law § 10-309 by establishing new fees, new application procedures, and new requirements.
  - 2) Basically, the Department tried to invent a two tier licensing system for outfitters and the guides that work for the outfitters to require both groups to be licensed.
    - (a) The bill was introduced in the Senate Committee and passed, but the bill failed in the House Committee.

- (b) The bill passed the Senate Committee with amendments and proposed changes, such as lowering the license fee and including a specific fine of \$ 1,000 for violations.
- (c) In the Environmental Matters Committee, the strongest opposition was the license requirement for the guides who worked for the outfitters. The Environmental Matters Committee had some discussion on having the outfitter's guides to register but not licensed.
- (d) WHS will review the input that was received during the 2003 General Assembly Session and revisit the bill and resubmit the bill during the 2004 General Assembly Session.
- (e) WHS wants the Commission's endorsement on the revise version of the bill with the new amendments.
- The Black Bear Task Force recommendations are noted on Secretary Franks' radar screen.
  - 1) WHS needs to develop the next 10-year Black Bear Management Plan.
  - 2) The current law requires the Department to raise money for compensations for black bear damages. It needs to be modified, which would require a law change.
- Director Paul A. Peditto outlined the WHS current budget situation. The WHS will be experiencing a reduction of 50 percent in General Funds. The Department is considering other opinions to obtain revenue.
- WHS will be reviewing the Shoreline License bi-annual renewal process riparian license holders. This may create a decrease amount of shoreline available to license non-riparians.

#### **WHS Natural Heritage Program Update**

- Presentation by Glenn Therres, Natural Heritage Program Associate Director
  - 1) Mr. Therres handed out Natural Heritage Program 2003 Annual Update to the Wildlife Advisory Commission [Attachment B].
  - 2) The Natural Heritage Program (NHP) is responsible for the conservation of the State's rare, threatened and endangered plants and animals, non-game wildlife, and natural communities. The Natural Heritage Program is also responsible for both state and federally listed threatened and endangered species.
    - (a) In regards to the federal species, the Natural Heritage Program is responsible for most of the surveys, monitoring, and documenting of the federally listed species in the State of Maryland.
    - (b) The Natural Heritage Program has 20 staff members, primarily zoologist, botanist, ecologist, and data managers. The Natural Heritage Program has three functional programs that are outlined in [Attachment B].
      - (i) The Science Program
      - (ii) The Regional Operations Program
      - (iii) The Conservation Technology Program
    - (c) Proposed changes to the State's Threatened and Endangered Species List [Attachment C] are done by regulations. Public comments have been favorable regarding the changes being proposed.
    - (d) The completed State's Threatened and Endangered Species Listed numbers entails about 450 species, and about 150 other species listed as extirpated. Mr. Therres summarized several projects that the Natural Heritage Program staff is working on. [Attachment C]
    - (e) U.S. Congress established State Wildlife Grants as a new federal funding source for state wildlife agencies [Attachment B]. This funding is from the efforts of the Teaming With Wildlife Program; in which Commissioner Adams has been the Commission lead and point person for the Teaming with Wildlife activities. The State Wildlife Grants are appropriation by Congress very similar to the Pittman-Robertson Funds. The formula is based on two-thirds of the state's population and one-third of the state's size; therefore, small states with more people benefit a little more than the formula for the excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment. Mr. Therres provided a list of projects submitted for funding. Commissioner Adams compiled the list that was agreed upon by this Commission [Attachment D].
      - (i) Natural Heritage Program staff is working on developing a comprehensive plan for these threatened and endangered species by October 2005.
      - (ii) NHP has partnership projects as listed on [Attachment D]. For example, the National Audubon Society is working on Important Bird Areas Project on a national level and the NHP will be assisting, helping funding and coordinating the Second Breeding Bird Atlas Project with the Maryland Ecological Society. There is a regional project in the Mid-Atlantic using radar technology to look for stopover areas for migrating songbirds, so NHP will be participating with the following states: New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The Fisheries Service will be cooperating with the State of Delaware in developing a captive broodstock program for the reintroduction Atlantic sturgeon in the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware Bay.
- Questions and Answers
  - 1) Commissioner Lamp asked if the projects listed in Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 are completed or what is the status of these projects.

- (a) The FY 2001 funded projects were fully implemented in FY 2002 and in FY 2003.
- (b) [Attachment D] reflects Federal fiscal years which provide NHP another year to implement these projects into NHP budget; therefore, these projects are on going. NHP just started to get involved in the State Wildlife Grants.
- 2) Chairman Lambert asked if the State Wildlife Grants required matching funds.
  - (i) The planning projects does require 25 percent matching funds, the implementation projects require 50 percent matching funds, and NHP is working on mostly planning projects. The Breeding Bird Atlas Project is funded by 40,000 dollars of federal monies and the Maryland Ecological Society is matching that with 1,000s of volunteers' time.
- 3) Commissioner Lamp asked who actually does the work for these projects.
  - (a) NHP will work with Universities, volunteers, National Audubon Society, and staff.

#### **WHS Regional Operations Program Update**

- Presentation by Pete Jayne Regional Operations Associate Director
- Ms. Iris Puffenberger is the Administrative Assistant for Pete Jayne; however, Ms. Puffenberger does a large amount of work for the Regional Operations Program.
- Associate Director Pete Jayne introduced regional managers.
  - 1) Jim Mullan (Western Maryland)
  - 2) Bryan King (Southern Maryland)
  - 3) Ken D'Loughy (Central Maryland)
  - 4) John Moulis (Eastern Maryland)
- Pete Jayne gave a Power Point presentation, which provided a more in depth overview of regional operations.
  - 1) The Regional Operations Program is the largest program in the unit with forty-seven staff at sixteen offices from Garrett to Somerset counties. The regional operations have a wide variety of job classifications, but most are Natural Resources Technicians.
  - 2) The total budget for all regions is \$ 3,965,000 that leaves \$ 647,000 for day-to-day operations. The percentage of each region's budget is the Eastern Region 37 percent, Western Region 28 percent, Central Region 23 percent, and Southern Region 12 percent.
- Program Mission
  - 1) Customer Service (Regional Service Centers)
    - (a) Staff issues over 1,000 permits.
    - (b) Staff assists with Licensing and Registration Service
    - (c) WHS strive to promote excellent customer service for internal and external customers.
  - 2) Public Lands
    - (a) Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are key aspects of the State Public Lands profile.
      - (i) Maryland has 41 WMAs totaling 104,000 acres.
      - (ii) WMAs are located in 16 of 23 counties in Maryland.
      - (iii) WMAs range in size from 20 to 28,500 acres.
    - (b) Mission and Goals Statement: "To conserve and enhance diverse wildlife populations and associated habitats while providing enjoyment of the State's wildlife resources." [Attachment E]
    - (c) Staff is involved in managing wildlife and habitat on other lands in the State, such as Cooperative WMA's, Natural Resources Management Areas, State Parks, and State Forest totaling 280,900 acres.
    - (d) Staff is working on improving WMA's maps. In addition, staff is working on increasing public access to WMA.
  - 3) Private Lands
    - (a) Private lands revolved around Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
    - (b) Regional Operations staff has a well-established support program with the landowners who are enrolling in CREP.
  - 4) Wildlife Response (Outreach Program)
    - (a) The Wildlife Response staff has many responsibilities; for example, wildlife emergencies, disease outbreaks, nuisance animals, and animal damage control.
    - (b) The Wildlife Response staff is involved in data collection, wildlife projects, and involved in Deer Management Permit System. The Deer Management Permit is issued to address agricultural damage on landowners' property.
    - (c) The Wildlife Response staff conducts outreach events, such as Junior Hunter Days, Envirothons, National Hunting and Fishing Day, Staff Booths at Outdoor Shows, and Presentations to Organized Groups.
    - (d) Bear Response Team is a unit in the Western Region. Staff is on call from April 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>. They received over 350 calls and complaints in 2002 and staff responded day or night on these calls and complaints. Bears are moving eastward; for example, staff received reports of sightings in Montgomery, Howard, and Carroll counties.

- Comment
  - 1) Chairman Lambert commented that the Regional Operations staff does a wonderful job with few staff members.
- Question and Answer
  - 1) Chairman Lambert asked if the Regional Operations have plans in the future to capture volunteers to help.
    - (a) Regional Operations do have some volunteers.
    - (b) WHS is working on developing a plan to promote volunteers to assist with some of our projects.

#### **Urban Wildlife Subcommittee Proposals**

- Chairman Lambert moved this discussion to Old Business for July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### **State Forest and Park Service Update**

- Mr. Bob Beckett, Chief Resources Management of State Forest and Park Service (SFPS) presented SFPS update:
  - 1) Deer hunting for this upcoming season, a proposal to add eight new bow hunting areas to various SFPS in the Central Region.
  - 2) The Central Region continues to have an increase in deer population. The following SFPS areas will have new bow hunting destinations: (1) Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area, (2) Susquehanna State Park, (3) Patapsco Valley State Park, and (2) Gunpowder Falls State Park.

#### **Natural Resources Police Update**

- Presentation by Sergeant Ingerson
- NRP Activities, April 14, 2003 through June 16, 2003 [Attachment F]
  - 1) Sergeant Ingerson outlined few of the incidents recorded in [Attachment F].
- Question and Answer
  - 1) Director Peditto asked where the Wildlife Sanctuary in Riva was.
    - (a) Sergeant Ingerson will report back to Director Peditto with the location of the Wildlife Sanctuary in Riva.
  - 2) Director Peditto commented that the name of our unit is Wildlife and Heritage Service and Forest Service is a separate unit.

#### **MSA Update**

- No report

#### **Maryland Farm Bureau Report**

- Mr. DeMatteo will report the fur user license concepts to the Maryland Farm Bureau.

#### **Old Business**

- No old business

#### **New Business**

- The WAC minutes and agendas will be e-mailed to the Commissioners with e-mail addresses.
- The election of Chairman for this Commission is on an annual basis; therefore, at the next meeting Commissioners will elect a new Chairman.
- Mr. Beyer mentioned monkeypox, which started in Mid-West. As of June 17<sup>th</sup>, there are reports of 64 cases in 4 states, and Maryland does not have monkeypox. The Gambian rat was the allege contributor that infected the prairie dogs. WHS staff is working with the Department Health and Mental Hygiene, the Maryland Department Agriculture (MDA), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). If monkeypox becomes an issue in Maryland, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will take the lead on this and WHS will support their efforts.
- Commissioner Lamp handed out a copy of an article in The Capital, Bay: "New Era, Same Concerns." [Attachment G]

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

#### **Attendance**

Members:	T. Lambert, C. Dollar, G. Fratz, R. Gregory, M. King, J. Lamp,
Guests:	C. DeMatteo, M. Wright
Staff:	B. Beckett, B. Beyer, K. Blizzard, R. Colona, K. D'Loughy, L. Hindman, M. Hoffman, P. Jayne, B. King, L. Ingerson, L. Manokey, P. Peditto, I. Puffenberger, J. McKnight, J. Moulis, J. Mullan,

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	G. Schenck T. Spencer, G. Therres
Absent:	L. Adams, W. Freeland, K. Jones, C. Garner